HISTORY OF THE ISLAND OF CELEBES, CONTINUED FROM THE MEMOIR OF MR. R. BLOK.

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HISTORY

OF THE

ISLAND OF CELEBES,

CONTINUED FROM THE

MEMOIR

OF

MR. R. BLOK,

Governor of Maccassar,

AND FROM THOSE OF HIS SUCCESSORS.

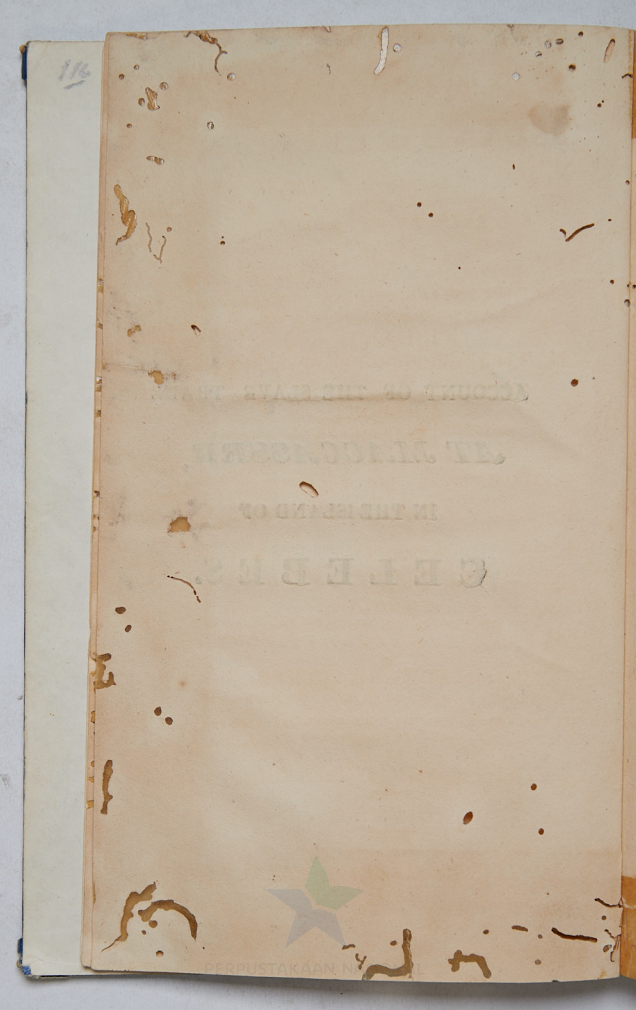


ACCOUNT OF THE SLAVE TRADE

AT MACCASSAR,

IN THE ISLAND OF

CELEBES.



HISTORY
OF THE
ISLAND OF CELEBES,
BY
MR. R. BLOK,
Governor of Maccassar;
WITH AN APPENDIX,
CONTAINING
A MEMOIR,
DRAWN UP BY THE SAME AUTHOR,
AND COMPREHENDING SUCH REMARKABLE EVENTS AS OCCURRED IN THE
ISLAND,
FROM THE BEGINNING OF HIS GOVERNMENT
TO 1808:
TO WHICH HAVE BEEN ADDED
A REPORT,
CONCERNING THE SLAVE TRADE
OF
MACCASSAR,
DRAWN UP BY A DUTCH COMMITTEE,
APPOINTED FOR THAT PURPOSE:
AND THE TRIAL AND SENTENCE
OF
COLONEL FILZ,
Late Dutch Commanding Officer
AT
AMBOINA,
WHO, ON THE 19TH FEBRUARY 1810,
SURRENDERED FORT VICTORY
TO
CAPTAIN EDWARD TUCKER,
Commanding His Majesty's Ship of War Dover.

THE WHOLE TRANSLATED FROM THE DUTCH LANGUAGE AND PUBLISHED IN FOUR VOLUMES
BY
CAPTAIN J. VON STUBENVOLL.

VOLUME 3.

PRINTED AT THE
CALCUTTA GAZETTE PRESS,
1817.

BAT. GENOOTSCHAP VAN KUNSTEN

Item Id: 0000381414360

PERPUSTAKAAN NASIONAL RI.

Tanggal : 19 Maret 2012
No. Induk : 20798/PN-MUSEUM/12
BIB - ID : WW 8360
Beli / Hadiah : Ex. Museum

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REPORT.

Concerning the Slave Trade at Maccassar, drawn up by the undersigned Committee appointed for that purpose.

Addressed to the Honorable the Governor in Council.

Fort Rotterdam, Maccassar, 21st September, 1799.

GENTLEMEN,

THE commission with which you were pleased to honor the undersigned, by a resolution of the 5th April last, being in our consideration of the utmost and of the highest importance, since it has for its object the abominable trade in men; a trade, which has an immediate, and very pernicious influence on the well-fare and prosperity of this colony, is attended with the most disgraceful circumstances and gives birth to the most lamentable abuses, the effects and consequences of which are beyond all calculation, we have entered into the subject with all the sentiments, which its magnitude ought naturally to inspire, and we have endeavoured fully to discharge our duty according to the much respected will of the Honorables the Supreme Government at Batavia, and to their satisfaction, as we trust it will from this report sufficiently appear to you.

Beginning with the first point, namely the orders successively published here about that trade, we ob-

serve that, as early as the years 1669 and 1670, that is to say from the first settlement of the Company at Maccassar, an order was issued by the then President in Council Maximilian De Young, decreeing that slaves for sale should first be examined at the bazar, by a writer appointed for that purpose; that then, the seller being also examined, the writer should make out proper transfers; and enacting that whosoever should be detected in taking to himself a male, or female slave without such a transfer, should for the first time forfeit the slave so purchased, and pay moreover a penalty of 25 Rix Dollars; for the second time the same with a heavier penalty of 50 Rix Dollars; and for the third time, besides the loss of the male, or female slave, and a fine of 100 Rix Dollars, be severely punished, according to the exigency of the case.

This placard, which mentions one of a still earlier period published by Admiral Speelman in conjunction with the Kings of the Allied Nations, on the 15th April 1666, and not to be found by us among the records in the Secretary's office, may be reputed the source from which most, if not all the orders for the prevention of abuses in that trade, have successively proceeded, as is to be seen from the contents of the placards, and orders of the 4th July 1716, 14th July 1729, 12th July 1746, 16th February 1759, and 7th August 1767, all of which are almost of one and the same tenor, with this difference only, that the penalties are made a little heavier, and they contain a further enactment for the transfers of the same person not being allowable more than three times, and for their delivery within 24 hours after the

sale.

sale. It was also specially enacted on the 16th February 1759, that the purchases made upon such lawfull transfers, as were executed at the Secretary's office, with the assistance of a Dutch Interpreter, and the joint evidence of the native Interpreters of Bone and Goa, should on no account be annulled, and that, on a claim to the person sold being preferred, it should be left to the choice of the purchaser, whether he would or not accept of his ransom.

In 1743, on the complaint of the Court of Bone that the inferior traders, navigating beyond the point of Bera* and in the bay of Bonet had bought there stolen people, and at the request of that Court it was resolved by the Political Council of this place, to give an open letter to be delivered to the first Deputy, or Tomarilalang, with an order therein contained, that if any stolen subjects of Bone bought by navigators were claimed by the Chief of their village, the purchasers should be obliged to deliver them, provided they were reimbursed of their money. But if the purchasers were furnished with the deed of sale from the Chief of the town or village, where the slaves were bought, they should then, according to law, remain possessors of them.

In 1750, the direct purchase of slaves by Government was abandoned; and it was resolved to contract for them, which was done on the sugges-

* A province on the South-side of Celebes, under the obedience of the Company, and in charge of the Resident of Bolecomba.—TRANSLATOR.

† The Bay of Bone on the South East side of the Island, leading into Bone.—TRANSLATOR.

tion of the then Chief Administrator Clootwyk, in the Political Council of this place, on the 11th of April of the said year.

By the fourth and fifth articles of the placard, issued by the Honorables the Supreme Government of Batavia on the 17th October 1752, it was ordered that no individual should detain, or conceal another person's male, or female slave, for whatever reason it might be, without the special consent of the master, or mistress; and that if such detaining, or concealing lasted longer than twice 24 hours, or an intention should appear to facilitate their escape, or to withhold them from their master, or mistress, the perpetrators of such offence, should without regard to their rank be considered and punished as guilty of seduction, or theft of slaves. In 1772 those provisions were, by a resolution passed on the 23d October of that year, enlarged upon in the following manner. "If persons, not freeborn and being still slaves, "detain or conceal their fellows, they shall, for "each 24 hours, be flogged in the bazar by the "officers of Justice; and if such concealment is "continued for more than thrice 24 hours, they "shall then be put in irons, for the space of three "years, and banished to some other place, whence, "after the expiration of the above term, they "shall be delivered back to their masters. But "if it should appear, that such slaves have de-"tained, and concealed their fellows with a de-"sign to facilitate their escape, or to withhold "them from their masters or mistresses, they shall "then be liable to the punishment decreed against "free-people, according to the exigency of the "case and pursuant to the sentence of the Judge,

"as

as provided for by the fifth article of the above mentioned placard."

It was further decreed, by an order of the 16th April 1764, that those, who held slaves for sale, should lock them up before 6 o'clock in the evening, within the place appointed to that use, and should not let them out till the following morning at 6 o'clock. By an advertisement of the 3d June 1771, a fine of 150 Rix Dollars, besides the costs of the inquest, &c. was fixed against owners of slaves for sale, whose slaves having loosened themselves from their chains, should be found on the road either dead, or alive.

In the year 1773, the orders of earlier years were not only renewed, but carried one step further, by making heavier the fine fixed upon already, in case the concealed or detained person should be free-born. The legality of the transfers was also limited to a second time; and it was enacted that persons who carried elsewhere for sale slaves not being lawfully their own, should be treated as slave-thieves, and sued for that crime by the fiscal before the Court of Justice. The same provision was made against those with whom any free persons, or slaves belonging to others, should be found, either in their houses, or in their vessels, for which, upon strong suspicion, an immediate search was to be made by order of the Governor.

In 1783, the Supreme Government at Batavia were pleased to make an alteration in the former orders, which was, that, instead of the provision made for persons guilty of stealing free-born people or slaves being punished as slave thieves, a difference in the punishment was decreed, according

cording to the exigency of the case. If the theft had been committed on free people, the punishment was to be whipping, branding, and banishment for life; if on slaves, whipping only and banishment for a certain number of years. Europeans in both cases were to be sent to the Netherlands, and the Natives to be put in irons, and to work at the public roads and at such places as should be appointed to them.

In 1783, on the 9th April, the Governor in Council here passed a later ordinance, by which, with the renovation of former orders, and especially of that of 1773, it was decreed, that the purchaser or detainer of free-born people, knowing them to be so, on conviction of that offence, should for the first time pay a fine of 200 Rix Dollars, and for the second time be exemplarily punished as a slave-thief; but that no person being provided with a regular deed of sale, should be liable to any thing more than to return the individual purchased by him, on an order to that effect being passed by the Governor, or by the Court of Justice, and on reimbursement being made to him of all his expences including purchase money, and other charges; and that in such a case, the interpreters employed as witnesses at the making out of the transfer, should be held responsible for all the consequences, and as it was their duty and their particular business to guard against the detaining of slaves, or of free-born people, they should incur the punishment, and fines decreed against that offence. But by a later order of the 3d April 1784, the fine of 200 Rix Dollars for detaining free-born people, was enacted without reserve; and the former provision

sion was renewed ordering that, upon a repetition of such offence, the person guilty thereof should be punished exemplarily as a slave-thief.

The abuses on this subject which have successively crept in, and the intrigues which are now used to obtain slaves, are so manifold and so various in shape and manner, that it would be very difficult for us to mention all of them. In attempting it even, though we should observe all possible strictness, we might from ignorance omit some thing, or from insufficient grounds of information, set some circumstances in too imperfect a light; because the villany, which is the very soul of this trade, hides itself in the dark; and it is only by accident that some uncertain account of its proceedings is now and then obtained. For that reason the undersigned Committee beg leave to be allowed to limit themselves to the most known blamable particulars, which being faithfully set down here, will sufficiently shew in what detestable and dreadful manner covetousness pursues and attains its infamous object, exhibiting itself sometimes in one frightful shape, and sometimes in another, affording food to the blood-thirsty vengeance of the Natives, and opening a wide field of trouble and mischief.

The making of a slave transfer, if properly viewed, consists indeed in nothing more than this: a person, who says that he has bought a slave, calls an Interpreter and goes with him to the Secretary's office, accompanied by any native, who gives himself as the seller; a writ of sale, according to the common course, is immediately made out; the purchaser pays to the Notary three rupees, puts two rupees into the hands of the Interpreter;

preter; and behold! the matter is adjusted, and the purchaser has become the lawfull owner of a free-born man, who very often has been stolen with his concurrence and co-operation. He is, however, in no fear for that, because the stolen slave is already concealed in a place where no body can find him. It also becomes very seldom public, because there never were found more faithful receivers than the slave-traders. This is a certain point with them, they will never, as they call it, betray their prison; what is to be understood by that expression, we shall have the honor to explain hereafter. But what is further to be thought of the value of those public instruments, to which the name of slave transfers is given, when some times it happens that both purchaser and seller are fictitious, and that the one and the other are blended in the person of the Interpreter? The right of property over a stolen man is then acquired with as much ease, as if he were already pinioned before the door, or within the yard of the pretended purchaser, and will cost nothing more than the small sum of one rupee, or two according to circumstances, which must be put into the hands of him, who performs the part of the seller. To find a person for this purpose does not require a long search, for it is a very easy and convenient trade to live on; and there are common natives in great number rambling about and doing nothing else. They have indeed no support but the little profits they make in that way. Slaves even, being bribed for a small fee, suffer themselves to be so employed. The person who is stolen and sold, is never examined, the Dutch purchasers having no care about that,

and

and the native interpreters quite as little; for such is the risk which they attach to their responsibility, that, if necessary, as many transfers, as wished for, could be got from them beforehand.

We may represent to ourselves our town filled up with prisons, the one more dismal than the other, which are all furnished with hundreds of wretched victims of Avarice, and Tyranny, chained in fetters, torn from their wives, their children, their parents, their friends and their comforts, and languishing in helpless misery without any prospect of salvation, or relief. Our imagination may set before us the picture (and how often has not this been a reality ?) of a man who saw his aged father perish by his side, in attempting to rescue him, whilst he, incapable of further resistance, was carried away and consigned to a state more dreadful than death itself, in which irrevocably robbed of all that is dear to every human creature, he has no change to hope for, but that of being for a trifle delivered over to the arbitrary will of a master, who, by payment of the price set upon him, has acquired the right of placing him among the number of his domestic animals, and of treating him some times worse than them.

If we now lift up another corner of the curtain, a no less afflicting scene presents itself. We discover wives lamenting the loss of a dearly beloved husband, children missing their parents, parents missing their children, who, with hearts filled with rage and revenge, run along in the streets before our doors, to do all that filial love of children for their parents, tenderness of parents for their beloved children can inspire them, in

Order to discover, if possible, where their dearest pledges are concealed. Often, very often all their labour and trouble are in vain. They have to return helpless, and comfortless to their afflicted friends and relations. Sometimes, however, the most profound secrecy is not proof against the zeal of their searching. If they can in any manner learn where their father or mother, their son or daughter, their husband or wife is kept in concealment, how hope must then revive in their anxious bosom, and how cheap appears to them the sacrifice, by which they flatter themselves to be put in possession of the object of their zealous search, for whose deliverance and safety they have so long made their despairing sighs ascend to heaven, and whom they are now eager to fold in their arms. But alas! the unhappy people have not yet reached the end of their sufferings. An obdurate purchaser, whose feet they are in vain watering with their tears, shall soon pronounce his sentence dictated by arbitrary power and unfeeling selfishness. That sentence is that the afflicted father may procure the liberty of his son, provided he pays an enormous ransom, which must plunge him and his family from a moderate competence into a sad indigence, or, which is still worse, burden him with debts, which, sooner or later, will again drive him or his relations into slavery.

It would be wrong to think that when these wretched people have thus gained their point, when, to furnish the demanded sum, they have sold their house and goods, or even pawned their own persons, and after the actual payment of the ransom agreed on, the matter is finished. Oh no!

no! the trader will not deliver up the emancipated slave until he departs for Batavia; and if it should be asked why? The reason is that he will not expose his prison to be betrayed. He is afraid lest the whole country should know what numbers of stolen people he keeps shut up within that dreadful place, lest his many execrable actions and horrid villanies, long concealed in the dark, should become public, and a general cry of vengeance should be raised against his guilty head. The son is therefore only exhibited to the afflicted father who sees him in a pitiful condition chained with fetters; and it is frequently then that the ransom is first agreed on. Surely the grief with which a father's heart is pierced at such a sight, and the alternate change, and rapid succession of emotions of despair, grief, hope and anxiety, which rend his tortured heart, placed in opposition to the cold blooded indifference for every thing but his own interest, with which a covetous purchaser knows how to take advantage of the poor man's distress, and to the obstinacy, with which he persists in his inhuman demand of each Rix Dollar, of each stiver, nay almost of each penny, every circumstance, in one word, of the shocking contrast can be more easily conceived than described. We trust that we have said enough to shew the abomination of practices, which cannot fail to have a very prejudicial effect on the minds of the natives againt white men.

But it will be said, the laws and the orders must speak in favor of the oppressed. We have in this respect shown above, how Government endeavoured, from time to time, to provide against these abuses. What is the case, however? When

selfishness prevails, law, reason, rights, humanity, in one word, all that is sacred must too often submit. Various circumstances, which time and local situation have produced, combine to that fatal effect; so that in spite of the most salutary statutes published against it, the evil cannot be successfully prevented. Experience has taught us that the most rigorous orders which Government could devise, were insufficient, to make a complete provision against the cupidity of slave traders.

The unfortunate men, whose sufferings we have hastily delineated, are not always stolen by foreign natives at distant places. That horrid species of robbery is very often committed near the houses of our own subjects, in our camps, or villages, within our own town. A numerous gang of villains, known by the name of Bonds-men, with some of whom every slave-trader is careful to provide himself according to his means, are the most useful instruments to procure slaves in the easiest and cheapest way. Being intructed in all the arts of villany they rove about by troops in the night, and at unseasonable hours, in order to seize their prey, which, if they succeed, they immediately carry to their employer, or to any slave dealer. Nothing more of it is usually heard, than that such a man has lost his slave, or that such a native is missing. The stolen man, woman or child is already chained, and shut up within the prison of some slave-trader, which is never visited. The slaves, when shipped for transportation, are always carried on board at night. If the stolen person be either a free-born man, or a slave of any of the inhabitants of this place, he dares not make

make himself known, as long as he is in the hands of the robbers; for in that case, they would kill him immediately, even were it before the door of the purchaser who wished to buy him; and the murderers after this have no difficulty to get out of the way, beyond the reach of justice.

Those, who are trained to this business, whether Bonds-men, or slaves, (for even among this latter class of people thieves of men are often found) must be armed with all sorts of cunning and artifice to attain their aim: for, except a few instances in which they are unexpectedly favored by chance, it generally takes them a considerable time before they succeed in catching any one, on whom they have once cast their eyes, because the unfortunate object of their desire is too much on his guard, particularly, when he himself frequents the same calling, and because they cannot seize him without some precaution, as he would certainly kill them if he could, or sacrifice his own life in defence of his liberty. For a long time therefore they lay in wait for him, endeavouring through a second, or third hand, to become acquainted with him, in order to gain his confidence, and then, we will not say, to conduct or allure him into the house of the slave-trader, although even this does sometimes happen, but to lead him to a remote spot, or merely to a certain distance from his house, when immediately he finds himself attacked by two or three miscreants in league with his pretended friends, and before he has time to put himself into a posture of defence, or to take hold of his criss, it is already taken from him. After his hands have been tied behind his back, crying for help would be of the most fatal consequence

quence to him; thus he has nothing else to do, but to remain quiet, and to suffer himself to be sold as a slave by his robbers, who know already where they are to carry him.

For such nefarious practices becoming so little public, and thieves being so seldom discovered, different reasons may be given, the principal of which are the profound secrecy of the prisons; the clandestine manner in which the slaves for sale are carried on board in the dark of the night; the vicious mode of making and confirming the purchase; the facility with which the thieves are able to get away, when they have any fear to be discovered; the difficulty of making a satisfactory inquiry about a crime, of which but a few of the perpetrators and their accomplices are generally within the reach of justice, whilst the stolen person is still more seldom present; the almost total impossibility, that offenders of this sort should be caught in the very act, so as to fall into the hands of the law; and finally the secret protection, which some native petty princes, living on plunder, afford to their subjects. All these, and many other reasons combine to make the practice of kidnapping go on almost undisturbed, and generally unpunished.

A rich citizen, who has a sufficient number o those tools called Bonds-men, carries on his trade much easier than a poor one does. The latter is often obliged to go himself to the Bougheese camp, or elsewhere, to take a view of the stolen prey, and to carry it home; whilst the former quietly smokes his pipe, being sure that his thieves will in every corner find out for him sufficient game, without any trouble to himself. The thief,

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thief, the seller, the interpreter, all are ready for his service, because they are all paid by him. In some cases, the purchaser unites himself with the seller for the purpose of deceiving the interpreter; whilst in other cases, the interpreter agrees with the thief and pretended seller, to put the stolen person into the hands of the purchaser. There wants on the side of fair dealing the necessary precaution, and the requisite scrutiny; and on the opposite side the profound secrecy of the prisons, and the strict care in shipping the slaves, correspond with the licenciousness with which the transfers are fabricated.

A distinction ought however to be made between such illegal, and criminal practices, and a more moderate trade in slaves, many of whom, it is true, are stolen, but not in our vicinity, nor in the districts of the Company; the other part are such persons as, according to the particular laws and custom of the natives of Celebes, have in some way or other forfeited their liberty, either in war, or for some misdemeanours, or on account of debts. These slaves indeed are higher in price, and the purchaser cannot make so great profits upon them; but they may appear in broad day-light; an interpreter may with security answer for them; such slaves can also be shipped very quietly in the day time; the horrid circumstance of murder abetting theft is not so much to be feared, and our town has to apprehend considerable less danger from that description of slaves than from the one mentioned before.

In order to put this trade on a tolerable footing, so that all abuses may be effectually remedied, the Undersigned Committee are of opinion, under correction

rection of a wiser judgement, that the orders already enacted and above cited ought to be maintained with all possible vigour, and that the several interpreters ought, if possible, to be kept strictly to their duty; that further a constant attention should be paid to the good order and tranquility of our town and to those people called Bonds-men, or hirelings, who by all possible means ought to be prevented from dwelling within the houses and campongs of our inhabitants; and permitted only to reside either in the Campong Baro or elsewhere; and finally, that the purchaser of a stolen man, or woman should, on their being claimed, be obliged immediately to deliver them up, without cost and damage to the innocent person, the purchaser having then no indemnification to demand but from the interpreter; and also that every one, without exception, should be obliged to carry his slaves for sale on board his vessel in broad day-light. All these being punctually observed would have a most salutary effect; and for the better establishment of the necessary measures, it would not in our opinion be inexpedient to suspend, if but for one year, the exportation of slaves.

The Undersigned Committee flatter themselves that, as far as possible, they have given satisfaction in the performance of their duty, and subscribe themselves with profound submission

(Signed) A. J. VAN SCHINNE,
Fiscal.

S. MONSIEUR,
Licence Master.
Additional

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Additional Report by the Translator

Containing facts and circumstances not mentioned in the first.

BEING one day busy at Maccassar in searching through the mass of voluminous half decayed records, my eyes fell on a small uninjured manuscript, which, when I looked into it, I found to contain the preceding Report on the slave-trade of that settlement, drawn up by a Committee of two Members of the Council of Police at that time, pursuant to an order from the Government of Batavia, received in 1798. I took the manuscript with me to my house, merely to read it. After perusal I thought that the knowledge of its contents might be conducive to the good of the human race, but that the Committee, whether they had been afraid of saying too much upon the subject, or that from prejudice, or self interest they did not wish for the entire abolition of the abominable traffick in human flesh, had purposely limited their remarks to the ordinary causes of the evils attending this trade, and to the manner of conducting it, and had avoided stating any facts and shewing too pointedly the horrible consequences, which at different times have occurred. As I have been myself not only an eye witness of several of them, but also occasionally a loser by the occurrence, I was induced to take a rough translation of that compendious work, and to enlarge it by a narrative of facts, which my own experience had made me acquainted with, during a former residence of seven years, as a Dutch Officer, at that place.

That the horrors of the traffic in men at Maccassar had risen to the highest pitch with impuni-

ty in every respect, even as to its mode of transaction, and that the Superiors, no less than the persons appointed by them for the restriction of its abuses, and of the evils they were sure to produce, more or less connived at them, according to circumstances, or to the condition of the persons concerned, is evident to me from what I have seen, and experienced, and will appear so to every body else by the following particulars.

As an instance that the natives at Maccassar do not fear to kidnap even half-cast Christians, I shall first state what happened in 1790, not long after my arrival there, to an Amboineese Schoolmaster attached to the Orphan institution, under the denomination of Malay-master, whose duty it is every evening, at 7 o'clock, to go to the Church within the Fort, there to read some prayers by way of evening vespers, at which however no other congregation appears, than one Corporal, and ten or twelve Soldiers off duty, who by turn are obliged to attend. That man, having in one dark evening performed his usual service, was on his way homewards, when, between the Fort and the town, he was stopt by two Native Ruffians, who, notwithstanding his assuring them that he was a Christian, and the Malay-master, immediately stript him of his clothes, pinioned him, and throwing about him an old piece of cloth, used by the Natives and called Saroong, carried him straight to a slave-trader of the name of Geesdorp. It being already late, Geesdorp, without looking at him, caused the poor stolen Amboineese to be conducted to the prison, or blackhouse, and told the Ruffians to come back in the morning, for the terms of the purchase to be settled

settled, and the transfer to be made. When the Kidnappers had quitted the house, the poor Malay-master immediately made himself known to those who guarded the prison; for he had not dared to do so in the face of the robbers, as they would immediately have killed him on the spot, even in the sight of Geesdorp, who would have been obliged to allow them to escape, for fear of being himself murdered, either by them, or if they had been apprehended and brought to punishment, by their accomplices, their friends, or their relations. As soon as the people saw that the supposed new slave was in reality the Malay-master, they carried him before Geesdorp, who, on looking him into the face, knew him directly. Geesdorp kept the poor man within his house for the night. Very early in the morning, before the Robbers could make their appearance, he repaired with him to the Governor, who from the mouth of the Malay-master himself heard all the particulars of the treatment which the unfortunate victim had received. The Governor upon this desired Geesdorp to say nothing about the affair to the Ruffians, who had kidnapped the Malay-master, and to pay them their price, without requiring from them a transfer, he taking upon him to refund the money. Had the Governor, instead of that, ordered Geesdorp positively to require the transfer, and for that purpose to bring them to the Secretary's Office in the Fort, he then, by confronting them with the Malay-master, would have had an opportunity to confine them in the jail of the Fort, and, to prevent further consequences, he might have secretly sent them to Batavia, where they

would have received a due punishment, without their friends, or relations knowing what had happened to them. Such examples repeated on similar occasions, would certainly have deterred the race of miscreants from stealing people. Kidnappers might otherwise have been originally checked in their abominable profession, had those only, whose care it was to guard against their nefarious practices, not connived at them in the making out of transfers for slaves purchased. If the desire for fees had not prevailed over the honesty of the Secretaries, who were not to make out a transfer for any person sold as a slave, without first examining all parties concerned, namely, the seller, the purchaser, and above all the supposed Slave, the unfortunate subject of the transfer; if, on finding this last to have been stolen, they had detained the seller, and delivered him into the hands of Justice, for the infliction of the punishment due to his crime; if the purchaser himself, on discovery that he knew of the theft and that he had connived at it, had been likewise made legally to suffer for his villany, there cannot be the least doubt but the practice of kidnapping either free people, or real Slaves, and the illegal purchase of them, would gradually have ceased, or at least become not so common. But it was quite otherwise. The Secretaries, whose monthly income chiefly depended on the quantity of Slave-transfers, were not so disinterested as to deprive themselves of a couple of hundred rixdollars, by being honest, and doing their duty. The same observation applies to the Fiscal, or Magistrate whose duty it was, on being applied to for a licence to put a new bought Slave in

in irons, first to see the person, and examine him, as well as the transfer made of him. If he found the person to be a legal slave and as such liable to be carried abroad for sale, he was then to grant the licence, and receive his fee, but not otherwise. Self interest, however, prevailed also in that quarter, and the miserable stolen people became the victims of official cupidity. From all this it is easy to be seen, that all the public men employed in checking the abominable abuse had a share in it, and that none of all the restrictive and salutary orders, successively passed against it were ever in good earnest put into force. In this manner the affair of the Malay-master was hushed up. The thieves received their money, and when afterwards they learned, that their stolen victim was really the Amboineese, or Malay-master, they laughed at the joke.

Of the readiness of the kidnappers to murder their stolen victims if they cannot dispose of them, I have been a personal witness, having once fortunately had an opportunity of saving the life of a poor man by purchasing him. It was in 1792. On a Sunday evening, between 5 and 6 o'Clock, I had taken a walk through the Bougheese town, and on my return home, between the Town-wall, and the Company's Garden, I passed by an obscure lane leading into some jungle, where I perceived two natives dragging a third along with them. I was immediately struck with an idea of their criminal intention. Having two stout Boys with me, and being myself armed with a sword-stick, I had nothing to fear from them. So I followed them with quick steps, and coming up to them, I asked what they meant to do

do in this jungle? The two Ruffians without the least hesitation told me, that, not being able to sell their Slave, they were tired of carrying him about, and they would therefore give him his liberty, the usual expression of such villains when they put to death a stolen person they could not dispose of. The stolen man was between twenty nine and thirty years of age, but looked much older. On seeing me he fell on his knees and conjured me to buy him. I took pity on the poor man, and asking the kidnappers how much they wanted for him, they said that any money would be more acceptable to them, than giving him his liberty for nothing, and that if I would give them eight Spanish Rixdollars, sixteen rupees, I should have him. I closed the bargain with them, and ordering my Boys to loosen the cords he was tied with, I took him home with me, accompanied by the two kidnappers. Having paid them their money, and intending to give the poor fellow his liberty, I told the thieves, I did not want them to make out a transfer, and desired them to be gone. When they had quitted my house, the poor man full of joy at having escaped being murdered by the Ruffians, fell again at my feet and offered me his warmest thanks. I desired him to rise, and questioned him what countryman he was, and whence he came? He told me that he was a Boughee dwelling at Bontualac, in the vicinity of the Town; that having some time ago sold two Buffaloes on credit to a relation of his at Maros, he had lately gone to Maros to demand the money due to him, amounting to fourteen Spanish Rixdollars, twenty eight rupees; that having received the sum he had

had but two days before left Maros, when on the road he was stopt by the two Villains, who immediately seized him, took away his spear and criss, pinioned and robbed him of all his money and clothes, after which one of them would have killed him on the spot, but the other prevented it, saying: "Why will you kill him? he is not "so very old, and still good enough for a com-"pany's Slave at Batavia; So, we may as well "sell him at any rate, it is better than to kill him "for nothing;" that having then thrown one of their old clothes over him, they had dragged him to Maccassar for sale, but none of the Slave-traders wishing to buy him, probably because they thought him too old, the ruffians had carried him to the place, where I had found him, with intent to murder him for fear of being detected, as he had imprudently given them a hint of his being an inhabitant of Bontualac. On the following morning, he told me that, if I would give him his liberty, he would not only repay me my money, but would in gratitude, as long as he lived, attach himself to me. My answer was that, at the moment I rescued him from death, it had been my intention to liberate him; that now, he was at liberty to go where he pleased; and that, if he was an honest man, he would not forget paying me when he should have it in his power to do so. He went, and took with him the two Boys, who on the preceding evening had attended me. In about three hours, he returned with his wife, children, and relations, laden with presents of all kinds such as the country affords. They thanked me with the warmest expressions they were able to find, for the dear life I had saved, and having paid

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me my money, they once more blessed me, and returned to their homes. I afterwards received many little services from that grateful family.

With regard to the horrible consequences, attending the traffic in stolen people when these break loose, I will relate two instances which happened during the period of my former residence at Maccassar. The issue of one of them proved most terrible, both to the purchaser, and to the victims who had made their escape. The other, by a timely discovery, was of no worse consequence to the trader, than the loss of his money; but all the poor wretches, who tried to regain their freedom, lost their lives in the attempt. In 1794, a naval officer, Lieutenant in the Company's service, named De Roi, being stationed at Maccassar and in command of a small cruising vessel, was ordered to sail to Batavia with dispatches for the Supreme Government. This unfortunate man, having not long before married a young lady with some little money, thought his present voyage a fit opportunity to increase the sum by purchasing slaves, whom he would sell for a good price at Batavia. He bought accordingly nine or ten very fine stout young men; but, intending to make the best of his money, every one of the slaves he picked up was what they call warm stolen, and he got them in consequence as cheap as he wished. Being ready, to sail, he put those slaves on board of his vessel slightly secured, thinking that his small crew, consisting of a few Europeans and some Javaneese sailors, would be sufficient to guard them, and left the harbour. When he came off the Islands, called the Brothers, the Slaves thus slightly secured, observing the smallness of the crew, half

half of whom only kept watch thought this a fair opportunity, to rid themselves of their fetters and of their master. Accordingly in the middle of the night, all being perfectly quiet on board, they rose all at once, each of them provided with a strong piece of fire wood, and rushed upon deck with their usual yells on such occasions. The unhappy officer, being in this manner roused from his sleep, became panick-struck, leaped over board, and drowned himself. Some of the few Europeans followed the example of their unfortunate commander, and lost also their lives in the watery deep. The rest in their consternation were all to a man cut off. The mutineers navigated the vessel northwards, behind the Brothers, to the shore of Mandhar, and, having plundered the vessel, set it a drift, landed and dispersed. As soon as this horrible deed became known, and it was as ascertained that the perpetrators were on the Island, the Governor of Maccassar applied to the king of Bone; and putting a high price on their heads, requested that Prince to send in search of them, and, if found, to deliver them over to the Company, in order that they might receive a condign punishment for the atrocious crime they had committed. The King of Bone, after a long search, at length got four of them, and sent them to Maccassar, where, after being delivered into the hands of the Court of justice, their condemnation was that they should first be brought to the ordinary place of execution; there to be laid upon the rack, pinched with red-hot pincers, to have their limbs broken alive, and to remain so till dead; and then that they should be dragged by their legs to the

sea-shore, and thence carried over to the Gallows Island, there to be hung up for the food of the birds of heaven. This sentence was, in the morning at 6 o'clock, executed in all its horrors. The first, who underwent the terrible punishment, was a lad of about fifteen or sixteen years of age; he died immediately under the hand of the executioner. Two of the remaining three died some while after; but the fourth, who had been the ring-leader, was at 12 o'clock still alive; and the executioner, to make an end of this horrid spectacle, took the cord by which the sufferer's neck was tied to the rack, and strangled him. Then the remaining part of the sentence was executed on the whole of them.

The other instance happened on the first of January 1795, at the house of a slave-trader, called Alexander Desiso. It being new year's day, Desiso and his wife, according to custom, had been dining out with their father; and the people in their own house availing themselves of the occasion, and partaking the festivities of the day, rambled about and neglected to watch their prisoners, who, perceiving that, thought it a good opportunity to break loose, and to liberate themselves by flight. In the mean-while, Desiso and his wife came home, the first being rather heavy from the liquor at his father's table. Overheated, as he was, he left his wife to enjoy her afternoon's nap in the bed-room, and laid himself down on a couch in the hall, where he fell asleep. Not long after, between 3 and 4 o'clock, eighteen or twenty of the confined slaves seeing no people moving, and the gate open, broke loose, and silently escaped through the gate leading towards

wards the plain opposite to the Fort. Unfortunately for them, one of Desiso's men met them at a short distance from the house. He ran directly home, and roused his master, who immediately summoned all the people he could find at hand, secured the remaining slaves by a proper guard, and with some armed men pursued the fugitives. Some dragoons and soldiers, who caught the alarm of *amock* (murder,) without further enquiry, gave him their assistance, and the flying wretches were overtaken, and partly shot and partly cut down in the most horrible manner, so that not one single man of them remained alive. Thus ended this affair, which, had the fugitives known that their keeper was laying so near on their passage, would most undoubtedly have begun with the murder of him, before they quitted the house.

That the house-slaves assist in Kidnapping their own comrades, out of the house of the common master, I can assert from my own experience, and from what happened to myself in 1795. I had a family of slaves in my house, consisting of the father, mother, and two grown daughters, the eldest of whom had three children. This family my wife's mother had given us on the day of our marriage. Among the other male-slaves in the house there was one of my own, a very good indeed and active boy. As I found him both faithful and intelligent, I always distinguished him from the other servants, which, particularly to the family I have described, caused great jealousy, and gave rise to perpetual bickerings between them. One day my wife, on a particular occasion, sent this boy with the eldest daughter of the above family to the bazar. My wife having for

some hours waited in vain for their return, became anxious about them; and fearing they were lost informed me of her apprehension. I immediately sent some people in quest of them, but the people returned, without having been able to trace either the girl, or the boy. Night came and neither of them appeared. In fact, they were lost, and we never heard any thing of them, till 1812, when my wife, following me to Maccassar, stopt at Samarang, where one day she was surprised to behold the very girl laying at her feet, imploring her pardon for having kidnapped Amsterdam, (such was the name of the boy) and carried him to the Bougheese town to a Boughee, who was to sell him, and to divide with her the produce of the sale. But the Boughee had been more cunning than herself; he had kept her into the bargain, and sold her together with the boy to a Malay slave-trader from Java, who carried them with others to Samarang for sale. The boy had died since, and she being now old, her master, a Dutch gentleman, of the name of Van der Burgh, had given her liberty to shift for herself. She begged my wife to take her to Maccassar; but she had behaved so very ill, that her request could not be prudently complied with.

In the report of the Dutch Committee mention is made of Bonds-men; what sort of persons they are I think it necessary to explain. That name is given to Natives, who for a certain sum pawn either themselves, their wives children, brothers, sisters, or other relatives. The sum, for a single person, never exceeds twenty-five, or thirty Spanish Rix Dollars. The rate is in proportion to the

the price which the person pawned may fetch by being sold, in case the debt when due should not be discharged.

These poor people some times are horribly situated. If they are young, and bound for labour within the house of the pawn broker, they are obliged, not only to work more than the slaves with whom they are associated, but every article, which they either spoil, break or lose, is put to the account of their debt; and it very often happens, that a person being pawned for ten Spanish Rix Dollars, the debt in the course of one year increases to twenty, or twenty five. When such a person gets sick, he who pawned him is obliged immediately, either to pay the debt, or to supply in his room another person of the same description. If the person pawned, whether man or woman, proves unable to defray by daily labour, not only the interest of the money for which he, or she is pawned, but also the cost of the food he, or she receives, and if the debt then is not discharged in a certain space of time provided for such a case in the deed of pawn, that person is carried to the Chief interpreter, before the Native Court expressly appointed to take cognizance of and to adjust all differences of that kind. Of that Court, the Governor is properly the President, though he never sits himself at it. The Chief interpreter, who acts in the Governor's name, lays afterwards all such cases and proceedings upon them, with the opinion of the Court in writing before him, which he either approves, or disapproves, according to the explanation which the Chief interpreter pleases to give him. Before that Court, the person

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pawned is brought, and a secret fee of five or ten Rix Dollars, according to circumstances, added to the ordinary fees of the procedure, will always influence the Chief interpreter to cause the Native Members of the Court, who fear him more than the Governor, to pronounce such person a legal slave, as not being able to pay his debt. The pawn-broker in consequence receives a deed from the Native Court, signed by the Chief interpreter, and by the Malay Secretary, instituting him lawful master of such a person, and declaring that person to be his legal slave.

It sometimes happens, however, that such Bonds-men will stand up against their oppressor. Of this an instance occurred in 1796, with three Javaneese bound to a Dutch Junior Merchant of the name of Vermeulen. This gentleman had, not very long before, arrived from Samarang, whence he had brought with him the three pawned men, who, being shoe-makers, were employed by him to make shoes for the Maccassar inhabitants. He had come furnished with a great quantity of leather, and as he gave to his three workmen only food, cloathing, and a few doits for beetel per week, he could sell cheaper than any other shoe-maker in the place, and had of course considerable demands; so that the three pawned journey-men were obliged to work all day and night almost to satisfy the customers of their master, as well as his own insatiable avarice. This hard labour daily accompanied by a good flogging, and bad food, could no longer be endured by them. One day then that Mr. Vermeulen was dining out at the Governor's, they formed the plan of throwing off the yoke of bondage by flight,

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but not before they had taken ample revenge upon their master's wife. Fortunately Mrs. Vermeulen, who had gone up stairs into her bedroom, to take her afternoon's nap, had not forgot to secure, as usual, the door inside. She had not been long on her bed, when the unhappy desperadoes, with their shoe-knives in hand, came to the door of the room, in which she was laying. Mrs. Vermeulen, on hearing the noise made to force the door, had no doubt but that it was an *amock* of the three Bonds-men produced by the ill treatment they had received from her husband. She jumped out of bed, and opening the window on the street, she gave the alarm to the people below, and to the passengers in the street, who immediately ran to the Government house, close by, and gave notice of what was going on. The unfortunate desperadoes seeing they could not succeed in forcing the door, and in avenging their wrongs upon Mrs. Vermeulen, had as soon as the alarm was given, retreated, and climbed to the roof of the house, with an intention, as it was supposed, to keep their station there with their knives in their hands till the night, when they could steal away from roof to roof to a place of shelter, and having escaped the search of their master go back to Java. But Fate had decreed it otherwise! The body-guard of the Governor were ordered to load their muskets and to shoot them down. They did so, and in less than three minutes, the miserable victims fell from the roof of the house, and lay on the ground, weltering in their blood. They died almost instantly. The executioner was sent for and dragged them by a rope tied to their feet along the road to the sea-side,

side, whence he carried them over to the Gallows island, and hung them up by their legs.

I could relate several more instances of the same kind, were I not afraid of disgusting the public with such horrible stories. I trust I have said enough to convince my readers of the atrocity of the traffic in human-flesh, not only in itself, but still more in the abominable consequences which attend it.

I must own however, that, had the salutary orders successively given by the Court of Directors, for the management of the affairs of the Dutch East India Company, to the Supreme Government at Batavia, been faithfully put into execution; had the purchase and sale of slaves, according to those orders, been limited to such persons only, as were really born in slavery; and had the avarice of the traders been properly restricted to the purchase of slaves proved to be so by a strict and impartial examination, the horrors of the trade could never have risen to such a height, that at length it became the source of inexpressible misery to numberless innocent people, and at the same time depopulated the country of almost half of its inhabitants, as, to my knowledge, there were annually carried off from the Island, to Java and to the other Eastern settlements, no less than four thousand persons, a just cause of the blame which on that account the Dutch drew upon themselves from the other Nations of Europe. A well regulated trade would on the contrary have been of great utility and convenience to the inhabitants of Java, and of other places, but more particularly of Maccassar, where the Natives have an insurmountable aversion

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sion to serve Europeans. But how could any regulation stand, when the public officers, whose duty it was to attend to the strict performance of the orders issued for the prevention of all abuses, were, by the temptation of presents and of fees, prevailed upon to connive at every not only secret, but even public transgression of those useful and wholesome orders?

Trusting that my readers will, in favor of the motive, pardon the weakness of my efforts in serving the Cause of Humanity by a faithful, though imperfect, exposure of the outrages it suffered from the combined avarice of the slave traders and of their official accomplices, I beg leave to recommend this little work to the kind consideration of a generous and enligtened community.

THE TRANSLATOR.

END OF VOL. III.

Page

ERRATUM.

Page 24, line 28—For warm stolen, read warm, meaning stolen.

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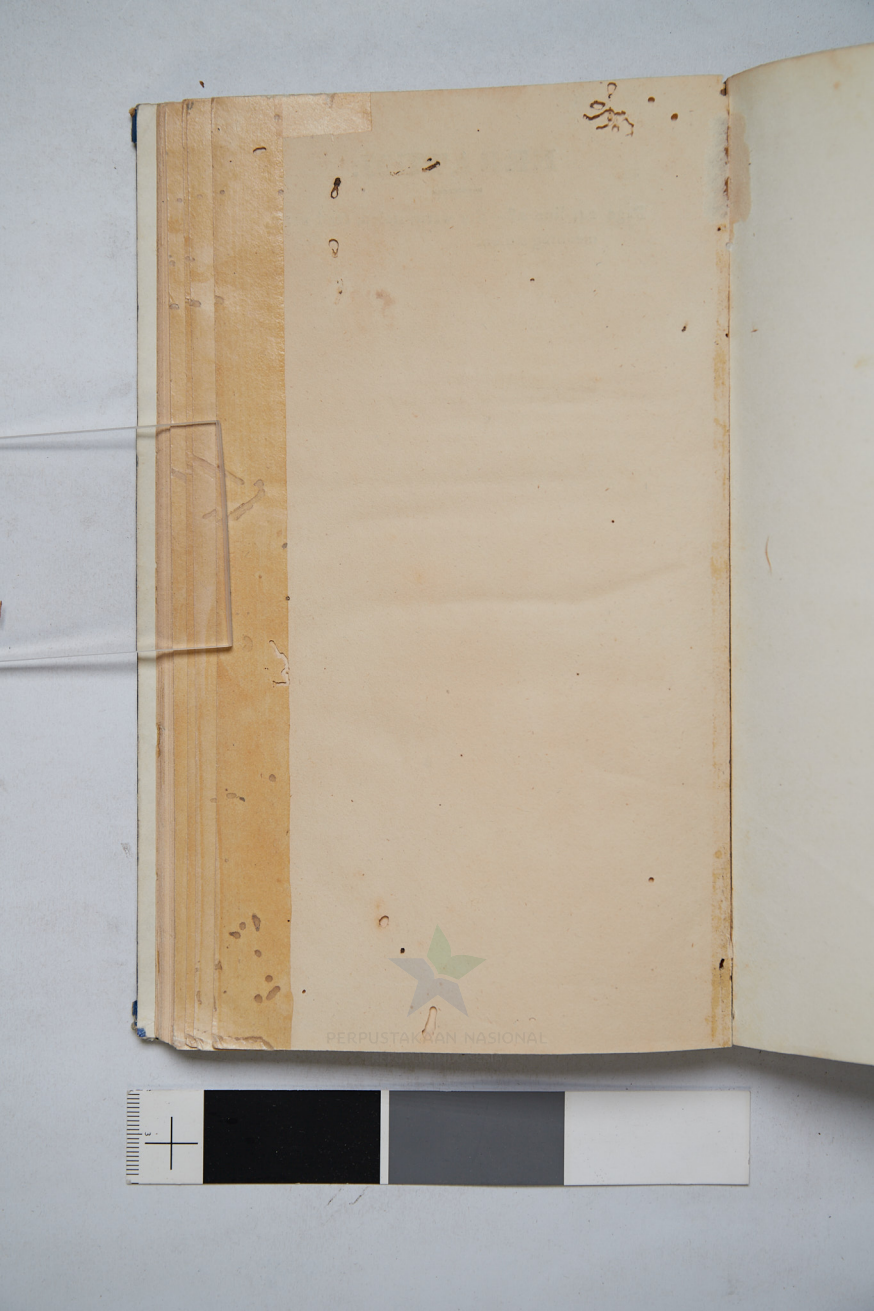
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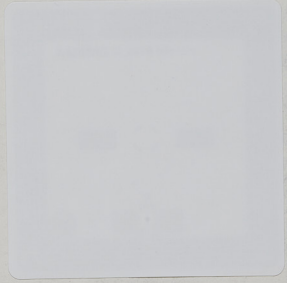

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